

SENATE BILL NO. 514

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE

(Proposed by the House Committee on Appropriations

on March 2, 2022)

(Patron Prior to Substitute--Senator McPike)

A BILL to amend and reenact §§ 64.2-2003, 64.2-2004, and 64.2-2020 of the Code of Virginia, relating to guardianship and conservatorship of incapacitated persons.

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**

**1. That §§ 64.2-2003, 64.2-2004, and 64.2-2020 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:**

**§ 64.2-2003. Appointment of guardian ad litem.**

A. On the filing of every petition for guardianship or conservatorship, the court shall appoint a guardian ad litem to represent the interests of the respondent. The guardian ad litem shall be paid a fee that is fixed by the court to be paid by the petitioner or taxed as costs, as the court directs.

B. Duties of the guardian ad litem include (i) personally visiting the respondent; (ii) advising the respondent of rights pursuant to §§ 64.2-2006 and 64.2-2007 and certifying to the court that the respondent has been so advised; (iii) recommending that legal counsel be appointed for the respondent, pursuant to § 64.2-2006, if the guardian ad litem believes that counsel for the respondent is necessary; (iv) notifying the court as soon as practicable if the respondent requests counsel regardless of whether the guardian ad litem recommends counsel; (v) investigating the petition and evidence, requesting additional evaluation if necessary, considering whether a less restrictive alternative to guardianship or conservatorship is available, including the use of an advance directive, supported decision-making agreement, or durable power of attorney, and filing a report pursuant to subsection C; and ~~(v)~~ (vi) personally appearing at all court proceedings and conferences. If the respondent is between 17 and a half and 21 years of age and has an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and transition plan, the guardian ad litem shall review such IEP and transition plan and include the results of his review in the report required by clause ~~(iv)~~ (v).

27 C. In the report required by clause ~~(iv)~~ (v) of subsection B, the guardian ad litem shall address the  
28 following major areas of concern: (i) whether the court has jurisdiction; (ii) whether a guardian or  
29 conservator is needed based on evaluations and reviews conducted pursuant to subsection B; (iii) the  
30 extent of the duties and powers of the guardian or conservator; (iv) the propriety and suitability of the  
31 person selected as guardian or conservator after consideration of the person's geographic location, familial  
32 or other relationship with the respondent, ability to carry out the powers and duties of the office,  
33 commitment to promoting the respondent's welfare, any potential conflicts of interests, wishes of the  
34 respondent, and recommendations of relatives; (v) a recommendation as to the amount of surety on the  
35 conservator's bond, if any; and (vi) consideration of proper residential placement of the respondent. The  
36 report shall also contain an explanation by the guardian ad litem as to any (a) decision not to recommend  
37 the appointment of counsel for the respondent, (b) determination that a less restrictive alternative to  
38 guardianship or conservatorship is not available, and (c) determination that appointment of a limited  
39 guardian or conservator is not appropriate.

40 D. A health care provider and local school division shall disclose or make available to the guardian  
41 ad litem, upon request, any information, records, and reports concerning the respondent that the guardian  
42 ad litem determines necessary to perform his duties under this section.

43 **§ 64.2-2004. Notice of hearing; jurisdictional.**

44 A. Upon the filing of the petition, the court shall promptly set a date, time, and location for a  
45 hearing. The respondent shall be given reasonable notice of the hearing. The respondent may not waive  
46 notice, and a failure to properly notify the respondent shall be jurisdictional.

47 B. A respondent, whether or not he resides in the Commonwealth, shall be personally served with  
48 the notice of the hearing, a copy of the petition, and a copy of the order appointing a guardian ad litem  
49 pursuant to § 64.2-2003. A certification, in the guardian ad litem's report required by subsection B of §  
50 64.2-2003, that the guardian ad litem personally served the respondent with the notice, a copy of the  
51 petition, and a copy of the order appointing a guardian ad litem shall constitute valid personal service for  
52 purposes of this section.

53 C. A copy of the notice, together with a copy of the petition, shall be mailed by first-class mail by  
54 the petitioner at least ~~seven~~ 10 days before the hearing to all adult individuals and to all entities whose  
55 names and post office addresses appear in the petition. The court, for good cause shown, may waive the  
56 advance notice required by this subsection. If the advance notice is waived, the petitioner shall promptly  
57 mail by first-class mail a copy of the petition and any order entered to those individuals and entities.

58 D. Any adult individual or entity whose name and post office addresses appear in the petition may  
59 become a party to the proceeding by filing a pleading in accordance with Rule 1:4 of the Rules of the  
60 Supreme Court of Virginia. Such individual or entity shall mail his pleadings via first-class mail to the  
61 petitioner, any counsel of record, the guardian ad litem, and all other adult individuals and entities whose  
62 names and post office addresses appear in the petition. Such pleading may also be sent via electronic mail  
63 or facsimile to all counsel of record and the guardian ad litem, as well as those other adult individuals and  
64 entities whose email addresses or facsimile numbers are known to the person filing the pleading. If a cross-  
65 petition is filed, the petitioner shall file a response to such cross-petition.

66 ~~D.~~ E. The notice to the respondent shall include a brief statement in at least 14-point type of the  
67 purpose of the proceedings and shall inform the respondent of the right to be represented by counsel  
68 pursuant to § 64.2-2006 and to a hearing pursuant to § 64.2-2007. Additionally, the notice shall include  
69 the following statement in conspicuous, bold print.

70 WARNING TO THE RESPONDENT

71 AT THE HEARING YOU MAY LOSE MANY OF YOUR RIGHTS. A GUARDIAN MAY BE  
72 APPOINTED TO MAKE PERSONAL DECISIONS FOR YOU. A CONSERVATOR MAY BE  
73 APPOINTED TO MAKE DECISIONS CONCERNING YOUR PROPERTY AND FINANCES. THE  
74 APPOINTMENT MAY AFFECT CONTROL OF HOW YOU SPEND YOUR MONEY, HOW YOUR  
75 PROPERTY IS MANAGED AND CONTROLLED, WHO MAKES YOUR MEDICAL DECISIONS,  
76 WHERE YOU LIVE, WHETHER YOU ARE ALLOWED TO VOTE, AND OTHER IMPORTANT  
77 RIGHTS.

78 NOTIFICATION TO OTHERS

79 ANY ADULT INDIVIDUAL OR ENTITY WHOSE NAME AND POST OFFICE ADDRESSES  
80 APPEAR IN THE PETITION FOR APPOINTMENT MAY BECOME A PARTY TO THIS ACTION  
81 BY FILING A PLEADING WITH THE CIRCUIT COURT IN WHICH THIS CASE IS PENDING.  
82 THAT PLEADING MUST BE MAILED TO THE PETITIONER, ANY COUNSEL OF RECORD, THE  
83 GUARDIAN AD LITEM, AND ALL OTHER ADULT INDIVIDUALS AND ENTITIES WHOSE  
84 NAMES AND POST OFFICE ADDRESSES APPEAR IN THE PETITION. IN ADDITION, SUCH  
85 PLEADING MAY BE SENT BY EMAIL OR FAX TO ANY SUCH OTHER ADULT INDIVIDUAL  
86 OR ENTITY FOR WHOM SUCH EMAIL ADDRESS OR FAX NUMBER IS KNOWN.

87 ~~E-F.~~ The petitioner shall file with the clerk of the circuit court a statement of compliance with  
88 subsections B, C, and ~~D~~ E. Certification of personal service made by the guardian ad litem as required by  
89 subsection B may satisfy this requirement as to compliance with subsection B.

90 **§ 64.2-2020. Annual reports by guardians.**

91 A. A guardian shall file an annual report in compliance with the filing deadlines in § 64.2-1305  
92 with the local department of social services for the jurisdiction where the incapacitated person then resides.  
93 The annual report shall be on a form prepared by the Office of the Executive Secretary of the Supreme  
94 Court and shall be accompanied by a filing fee of \$5. To the extent practicable, the annual report shall be  
95 formatted in a manner to encourage standardized and detailed responses from guardians. The local  
96 department shall retain the fee in the jurisdiction where the fee is collected for use in the provision of  
97 services to adults in need of protection. Within 60 days of receipt of the annual report, the local department  
98 shall file a copy of the annual report with the clerk of the circuit court that appointed the guardian, to be  
99 placed with the court papers pertaining to the guardianship case. Twice each year the local department  
100 shall file with the clerk of the circuit court a list of all guardians who are more than 90 days delinquent in  
101 filing an annual report as required by this section. If the guardian is also a conservator, a settlement of  
102 accounts shall also be filed with the commissioner of accounts as provided in § 64.2-1305.

103 B. The annual report to the local department of social services shall include:

- 104 1. A description of the current mental, physical, and social condition of the incapacitated person,  
105 including any change in diagnosis or assessment of any such condition of such incapacitated person by  
106 any medical provider since the last report;
- 107 2. A description of the incapacitated person's living arrangements during the reported period,  
108 including a specific assessment of the adequacy of such living arrangement;
- 109 3. The medical, educational, vocational, social, recreational, and any other professional services  
110 and activities provided to the incapacitated person and the guardian's opinion as to the adequacy of the  
111 incapacitated person's care. The information required by this subdivision shall include (i) the specific  
112 names of the medical providers that have treated the incapacitated person and a description of the  
113 frequency or number of times the incapacitated person was seen by such providers; (ii) the date and  
114 location of and reason for any hospitalization of such incapacitated person; and (iii) a description of the  
115 educational, vocational, social, and recreational activities in which such incapacitated person participated;
- 116 ~~4. A statement of the frequency and nature of the guardian's visits with and activities on behalf of~~  
117 ~~the incapacitated person;~~
- 118 ~~5-4.~~ A statement of whether the guardian agrees with the current treatment or habilitation plan;
- 119 ~~6-5.~~ A statement of whether the incapacitated person has been an alleged victim in a report of  
120 abuse, neglect, or exploitation made pursuant to Article 2 (§ 63.2-1603 et seq.) of Chapter 16 of Title 63.2,  
121 to the extent known, and whether there are any other indications of abuse, neglect, or exploitation of such  
122 incapacitated person;
- 123 ~~6.~~ A recommendation as to the need for continued guardianship; and any recommended changes  
124 in the scope of the guardianship; ~~and any other information useful in the opinion of the guardian; and~~
- 125 7. The names of any persons whose access to communicate, visit, or interact with the incapacitated  
126 person has been restricted, the reasons for such restriction, and a statement of whether the incapacitated  
127 person has been informed of the restriction;
- 128 8. A self-assessment by the guardian as to whether he feels he is able to continue to carry out the  
129 powers and duties imposed upon him by § 64.2-2019 and as specified in the court's order of appointment  
130 pursuant to § 64.2-2009;

131 9. A statement as to whether the guardian has completed the training required by subsection E1 of  
132 § 64.2-2019;

133 10. Unless the incapacitated person resides with the guardian, a statement of the frequency and  
134 nature of any (i) in-person visits from the guardian with the incapacitated person over the course of the  
135 previous year and (ii) visits over the course of the previous year from a designee who is directly supervised  
136 or contracted by the guardian, including the name of the designee performing such visit. If any visit  
137 described in this section is made virtually, the guardian shall include such information in the annual report;

138 11. If no visit is made within a six-month period, the guardian shall describe any challenges or  
139 limitations in completing such visit;

140 12. A general description of the activities taken on by the guardian for the benefit of the  
141 incapacitated person during the past year;

142 13. Any other information deemed necessary by the Office of the Executive Secretary of the  
143 Supreme Court of Virginia or the Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services to understand the  
144 condition, treatment, and well-being of the incapacitated person;

145 14. Any other information useful in the opinion of the guardian; and

146 15. The compensation requested and the reasonable and necessary expenses incurred by the  
147 guardian.

148 The guardian shall certify by signing under oath that the information contained in the annual report  
149 is true and correct to the best of his knowledge. If a guardian makes a false entry or statement in the annual  
150 report, he shall be subject to a civil penalty of not more than \$500. Such penalty shall be collected by the  
151 attorney for the Commonwealth or the county or city attorney, and the proceeds shall be deposited into  
152 the general fund.

153 C. If the local department of social services files notice that the annual report has not been timely  
154 filed in accordance with subsection A with the clerk of the circuit court, the court may issue a summons  
155 or rule to show cause why the guardian has failed to file such annual report.

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